DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 450 497 EC 308 252

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TITLE In Search of the Promised Land: The Collected Papers of Burton Blatt.

ISBN ISBN-0-940898-63-2
PUB DATE 1999-00-00
NOTE 181p.
AVAILABLE FROM American Association on Mental Retardation, 444 North Capitol St., NW, Suite 846, Washington, DC 20001-1512 ($34.95).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Collected Works - General (020)
EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Civil Liberties; *Deinstitutionalization (of Disabled); *Developmental Disabilities; Educational Policy; Ethics; Human Services; Institutionalized Persons; *Mental Retardation; *Policy Formation; *Values
IDENTIFIERS *Blatt (Burton)

ABSTRACT

This volume contains selections from the writings of Burton Blatt, a prolific writer who advocated for the deinstitutionalization of people with developmental disabilities. Part 1 starts with excerpts from "Christmas in Purgatory" (1966), followed by Blatt's subsequent reflections on reactions to the book, and an address before the Massachusetts legislature. Part 2 contains poems and aphorisms written by Blatt and originally published in "Exodus from Pandemonium" (1970) and "Souls in Extremis" (1973). Part 3 contains excerpts from Blatt's writings on public policy and stresses the need for public policy to have a solid foundation in human values and humanitarian concern. Included are excerpts from the following: "Man through a Turned Lens," "How To Destroy Lives by Telling Stories," "Aspirations and Values," and "The Controversies". Finally, Part 4 contains some of Blatt's writings on the professions. The first two selections, "This Crazy Business" and "The Industries," provide his reflections on mental retardation professions and the field generally. The final excerpt, "If People Could Heed Good Advice," is a personal reflection on living well. A biographical sketch of Burton Blatt is also included. (Contains references.) (DB)

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